

IN THE CLAIMS

The text of all pending claims, along with their current status, is set forth below:

35. (currently amended) A method of forming solder balls, the method comprising the acts of:

(a)——disposing solder within a plurality of receptacles disposed within a surface of a conveyor belt; and

(b)——heating the solder disposed within the receptacles to form a solder ball within each receptacle.

54. (previously presented) The method as recited in claim 35, wherein disposing solder within the plurality of receptacles comprises disposing solder within the plurality of receptacles formed by a first portion of the conveyor belt having a plurality of holes disposed upon a second portion of the conveyor belt.

55. (previously presented) The method as recited in claim 35, wherein disposing solder comprises using a squeegee positioned adjacent to the surface of the conveyor belt to deposit solder within the receptacles.

56. (previously presented) The method as recited in claim 35, wherein disposing solder within the plurality of receptacles comprises disposing solder within non-wettable receptacles.

57. (previously presented) The method as recited in claim 35, wherein disposing solder within the plurality of receptacles comprises disposing solder within receptacles of uniform volume.

58. (previously presented) The method as recited in claim 35, wherein disposing solder within the plurality of receptacles comprises disposing solder within receptacles of uniform size.

59. (previously presented) The method as recited in claim 35, wherein each of the plurality of receptacles have a width greater than a diameter of the solder ball formed within each respective receptacle.

60. (previously presented) The method as recited in claim 35, wherein the conveyor belt comprises one of stainless steel and titanium.

61. (previously presented) The method as recited in claim 35, wherein heating the solder disposed within the receptacles comprises moving the conveyor belt along a given path through a furnace.

62. (previously presented) The method as recited in claim 35, further comprising cleaning the solder balls with a cleaning device positioned downstream of the heating device.

63. (previously presented) The method as recited in claim 35, further comprising transferring the solder balls from the conveyor belt to a catch basin positioned downstream of the heating device.

64. (previously presented) The method as recited in claim 35, further comprising removing the solder balls from the conveyor belt.

65. (previously presented) The method as recited in claim 64, wherein removing the solder balls comprises vibrating the conveyor belt to discharge the solder balls from the conveyor belt.